

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) A shoe comprising:

an outsole having an upper surface, an opposite lower surface, and a heel section, the upper surface being positioned relatively closer to a wearer's foot and the lower surface being positioned to engage upon a floor or ground surface when the shoe is worn during walking, the lower surface of the outsole having at least one groove formed therein to enhance the flexibility of the outsole, the outsole further defining an aperture in the heel section extending from the upper surface to the opposite lower surface; and

a resilient, deformable first cushion disposed in said aperture, with an upper cushion surface of said first cushion disposed at a region of the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section and a lower cushion surface of said first cushion exposed at a region of the lower surface of the outsole in the heel section,

said first cushion being adapted to deform and flow toward the floor or ground surface under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike, and

the outsole having a perimeter, and at least one of said at least one groove having a closed-loop shape substantially parallel to the perimeter of the outsole, the outsole further comprising a recessed wall surface extending generally upwards from the lower surface toward the upper surface and defining a recessed region in communication, at its upper reaches, with said aperture, said lower cushion surface of said first cushion, exposed at the aperture within said recessed region, being spaced by said recessed wall surface of said outsole above the floor or

ground surface at all times, including when said first cushion deforms and flows under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A shoe comprising:

an outsole having an upper surface, an opposite lower surface, and a heel section, the upper surface being positioned relatively closer to a wearer's foot and the lower surface being positioned to engage upon a floor or ground surface when the shoe is worn during walking, the lower surface of the outsole having a grid pattern formed therein to enhance the flexibility of the outsole, the outsole further defining an aperture in the heel section extending from the upper surface to the opposite lower surface; and

a resilient, deformable first cushion disposed in said aperture, with an upper cushion surface of said first cushion disposed at a region of the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section and a lower cushion surface of said first cushion exposed at a region of the lower surface of the outsole in the heel section,

said first cushion being adapted to deform and flow toward the floor or ground surface under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike, and

the outsole further comprising a recessed wall surface extending generally upwards from the lower surface toward the upper surface and defining a recessed region in communication, at its upper reaches, with said aperture, said lower cushion surface of said first cushion, exposed at the aperture within said recessed region, being spaced by said recessed wall surface of said outsole above the floor or ground surface at all times, including when said first cushion deforms and flows under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike.

10. (Currently Amended) The shoe according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 9, wherein the upper surface of the outsole has a grid pattern formed therein to enhance the flexibility of the outsole.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A shoe comprising:

an outsole having an upper surface, an opposite lower surface, and a heel section, the upper surface being positioned relatively closer to a wearer's foot and the lower surface being positioned to engage upon a floor or ground surface when the shoe is worn during walking, the outsole further defining an aperture in the heel section extending from the upper surface to the opposite lower surface; and

a resilient, deformable first cushion disposed in said aperture, with an upper cushion surface of said first cushion disposed at a region of the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section and a lower cushion surface of said first cushion exposed at a region of the lower surface of the outsole in the heel section,

said first cushion comprising a polymeric gelatinous material, and said first cushion being adapted to deform and flow toward the floor or ground surface under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike, and

the outsole further comprising a recessed wall surface extending generally upwards from the lower surface toward the upper surface and defining a recessed region in communication, at its upper reaches, with said aperture, said lower cushion surface of said first cushion, exposed at the aperture within said recessed region, being spaced by said recessed wall surface of said outsole above the floor or ground surface at all times, including when said first cushion deforms and flows under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike.

13-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A shoe comprising:

an outsole having an upper surface, an opposite lower surface, and a heel section, the upper surface being positioned relatively closer to a wearer's foot and the lower surface being positioned to engage upon a floor or ground surface when the shoe is worn during walking, the

outsole further defining an aperture in the heel section extending from the upper surface to the opposite lower surface; and

a resilient, deformable first cushion disposed in said aperture, with an upper cushion surface of said first cushion disposed at a region of the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section and a lower cushion surface of said first cushion exposed at a region of the lower surface of the outsole in the heel section,

said first cushion being adapted to deform and flow toward the floor or ground surface under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike, and

the outsole further comprising a recessed wall surface extending generally upwards from the lower surface toward the upper surface and defining a recessed region in communication, at its upper reaches, with said aperture, said lower cushion surface of said first cushion, exposed at the aperture within said recessed region, being spaced by said recessed wall surface of said outsole above the floor or ground surface at all times, including when said first cushion deforms and flows under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike, and

the outsole further comprising a sidewall along the heel section of the outsole, the sidewall including a cut-out portion.

19. (Previously Presented) The shoe according to claim 18 wherein the cut-out portion is a slot.

20. (Previously Presented) The shoe according to claim 18 further comprising a second cushion disposed in the outsole adjacent to the cut-out portion.

21. (Previously Presented) The shoe according to claim 20 wherein the second cushion deforms and flows outwardly at the cut-out portion during heel strike.

22. (Previously Presented) A shoe comprising:

an outsole having an upper surface, a lower surface, a heel section, and a sidewall along the heel section, the outsole further defining an aperture in the heel section extending from the upper surface to the lower surface and a cut-out portion in the sidewall;

a resilient, deformable first cushion disposed in said aperture, with an upper cushion surface of said first cushion disposed at a region of the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section and a lower cushion surface of said first cushion exposed at a region of the lower surface of the outsole in the heel section; and

a resilient, deformable second cushion disposed on the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section,

said first cushion being adapted to deform and flow toward the floor or ground surface under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike, and said second cushion being shaped to deform outwardly at the cut-out portion; and

the outsole further comprising a recessed wall surface extending generally upwards from the lower surface toward the upper surface and defining a recessed region in communication, at its upper reaches, with said aperture, said lower cushion surface of said first cushion, exposed at the aperture within said recessed region, being spaced by said recessed wall surface of said outsole above the floor or ground surface at all times, including when said first cushion deforms and flows under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike.

23. (Previously Presented) The shoe outsole according to claim 22 wherein the first cushion includes a protrusion that protrudes at the aperture.

24-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Presented) A shoe comprising:

an outsole having an upper surface, an opposite lower surface, and a heel section, the upper surface being positioned relatively closer to a wearer's foot and the lower surface being positioned to engage upon a floor or ground surface when the shoe is worn during walking, the

outsole further defining an aperture in the heel section extending from the upper surface to the opposite lower surface; and

a resilient, deformable first cushion disposed in said aperture, with an upper cushion surface of said first cushion disposed at a region of the upper surface of the outsole in the heel section and a lower cushion surface of said first cushion exposed at a region of the lower surface of the outsole in the heel section, the first cushion comprising a polymeric, gelatinous material;

said first cushion being adapted to deform and flow toward the floor or ground surface under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike;

the upper surface including a recessed region disposed around the aperture, for receiving the first cushion; and

the outsole further comprising a recessed wall surface extending generally upwards from the lower surface toward the upper surface and defining a recessed region in communication, at its upper reaches, with said aperture, said lower cushion surface of said first cushion, exposed at the aperture within said recessed region, being spaced by said recessed wall surface of said outsole above the floor or ground surface at all times, including when said first cushion deforms and flows under the wearer's weight and force of heel strike.

27. (Previously Presented) The shoe according to claim 26 wherein the outsole further comprises a sidewall along the heel section of the outsole, the sidewall including a cut-out portion.

28. (Previously Presented) The shoe according to claim 27 further comprising a second cushion disposed in the outsole adjacent to the cut-out portion.

29. (Previously Presented) The shoe according to claim 28 wherein the second cushion deforms and flows outwardly at the cut-out portion during heel strike.